

Flight 93 National Memorial Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 7, 2008


CONTACT: Joanne Hanley; 814.443.4557

National Park Service Pleased with Overwhelming Support for Memorial Design at August 2, 2008 Meeting of Partners

Somerset, PA -- The National Park Service reflected today on the tremendous show of support for the memorial at the joint meeting of the Flight 93 Advisory Commission and the Flight 93 Memorial Task Force on Saturday August 2, 2008 at the Somerset County Courthouse, in Somerset, PA. The number of supporters of the memorial design overwhelmingly outnumbered memorial design conspiracy theorists. This included members of the Families of Flight 93, volunteers who work at the temporary memorial and in the Flight 93 office, community members, and members of the Task Force.

Eight family members spoke passionately or had their remarks read into the record, in support of the memorial design and the design process. David Beamer, father of passenger Todd Beamer, gave a fervent plea to stop the unhealthy and destructive obsession with the Islamic conspiracy theories. Beamer said that he had independently investigated the design and met with the architect and found no fault with the plan, describing it as “remarkable, special, and appropriate.” He also unveiled his personal fundraising efforts, asking one million Americans to join him in building this memorial.

Calvin Wilson, brother-in-law of Flight 93 First Officer Leroy Homer, fiercely charged that it was un-American for the conspiracy theorists to threaten people working on this project. Wilson went on to criticize the memorial detractors, emphasizing that the 40 heroes came from many different walks of life, put aside differences and arrived at a decision that was the right thing to do with regards to saving other’s lives. Wilson also emphasized how we need to do the same now with the building of the memorial.



Several family members – Ed Root (cousin of Flight Attendant Lorraine Bay), Carole O’Hare (daughter of passenger Hilda Marcin), and Jerry Bingham (father of passenger Mark Bingham) – were on the juries to select the winning design, and gave their unqualified support to the integrity and transparency of the democratic design competition process, and to Paul Murdoch Architects’ winning design. Debby Borza, mother of passenger Deora Bodley, has been active in the memorial process for many years, and also spoke in support of the memorial.

Patrick White, Vice-President of the Families of Flight 93, and cousin of passenger Louis J. Nacke, stood his ground and said “enough.” Mr. White reiterated that the conspiracy claims were heard, investigated years ago, were discounted, and this memorial will be built. Christine Fraser, sister of passenger Colleen Fraser, closed the public comment period with passion to honor the memory of loved ones aboard Flight 93 and to build and support this beautifully designed memorial.

In her report to the Advisory Commission and the Task Force, National Park Service Superintendent Joanne Hanley spoke with conviction about the truth related to this project. She stated, “The truth is that this project was started by 40 heroes who loved freedom and democracy; who were patriots. The truth is that this project will be completed by people who love freedom and democracy, who love this country, and who are patriots. This is a labor, an avocation and a vocation of love. The will of the families, the partners and the American people will be done.”

She went on to say, “I am proud of what we’ve accomplished; I am proud to be a part of this; and I am proud to be an American. I love this country; I love the ideals, the morals, the truth and the character upon which the founding fathers built this country. Thirty years ago, when I embarked on my vocation and avocation, I took an oath, as did all of the Federal Advisory Commissioners sitting here, to defend the Constitution of the United States, so help me God. That oath still stands today, perhaps even burning brighter and stronger.”

People are encouraged to visit the Flight 93 website – www.nps.gov/flni - to listen to family members and partners speak about the memorial, to read statements from partners, and to



learn in detail about the design, about the temporary memorial, and about how you can help support the memorial.

Congress authorized the establishment of a federal commission to assist the Department of the Interior and the National Park Service with the formulation of plans for a permanent memorial to honor the passengers and crew of Flight 93. The Flight 93 Memorial Task Force is a grass roots organization comprised of family members, community residents, first responders, educators, and other local, regional and national participants. Members play an instrumental role in helping to create the permanent memorial and ensuring that the heroes of Flight 93 and the story of the design competition for the permanent memorial; the results of the Fundraising Feasibility Study; and many other aspects of memorial development. The Commission and the Task Force both are working closely with the other project partners – the Families of Flight 93 and the National Park Service – to accomplish this goal.